

Consolidation of ESWG Partner Findings on COVID-19 Assessments in Jordan

May 2020

1. Introduction

The following documents outline all findings collected from ESWG partners as part of COVID-19 needs assessments in Jordan.

It is important to note that this document does not aim to compare different findings, but present a partial overview of education situations during school closures drawing on the available findings of assessments by several organizations. The data and figures are by no means comparable, because different organisations employ different methodologies, data collection and sampling methods in different geographical areas in different timing.

The assessments reviewed and used for this document include:

Agency name	Sample size (household)	Coverage in Camps	Coverage in Host Community	Nationalities	Date of Data Collection
NRC	827	Zaatari, Azraq	Amman, Ajloun, Irbid, Madaba, Mafraq, Zarqa	Syrians, Jordanians, Other	March 2020
Not specified	408	N/A	Amman, Ajloun, Irbid, Karak, Ma'an, Madaba, Tafilah	Syrians, Jordanians	March 2020
RI	1,705	Zaatari, Azraq	N/A	Syrians	March 2020
WV	470	Zaatari, Azraq	Amman, Irbid, Mafraq, Zarqa	Syrians, Jordanians, Palestinian	April 2020
Care	267	Azraq	Amman, Mafraq, Irbid, Zarqa	Syrians, Jordanians, Iraqis, Yemini, Sudanese	April 2020
UNICEF / UNHCR / WFP	1,124	N/A	Amman, Ajloun, Aqaba, Balqa, Irbid, Karak, Ma'an, Madaba, Mafraq, Tafilah, Zarqa	Syrians, Jordanians, Iraqis, Yemini, Sudanese, Somalis, Pakistanis (ITS)	April 2020
Center for Strategic Studies	Not available	Not available	Not available	Jordanians	April 2020

2. Summary of Consolidated Findings

Findings from the different assessments are grouped under 4 main thematic areas:

1. Internet access and device ownership
2. Awareness of distance learning
3. Use and accessibility (including challenges) of remote online learning
4. Support to students, caregivers, and teachers

Additionally, findings are split between three main locations (host specific, camp specific, or both).

Internet Access and Device Ownership

Camp Specific (NRC and RI)

The average household surveyed has 3 children between the ages of 6 and 17 who are in-school and an average of 2 devices. Devices include TVs, smartphones, computers, laptops, and tablets. With almost all households surveyed possess a TV.

92% of households possess at least 1 device that could be connected to the internet, however 87% have access to an internet connection. Of households with no internet connection:

- Only 42% have access to at least 1 device able to connect to the internet
- 96% own a TV

More specifically, in Azraq, 85% of households reported having access to internet. Whereas in Zaatari, 81% of households reported having access to internet. Type of internet access reported include: 94% smart phone bundles, 4% routers, 1% fiber connection, and 1% other.

87% of households reported routinely consuming the internet bundle per month. 52% of households use both WhatsApp and Facebook, 45% reported using WhatsApp only, and 3% only use Facebook.

93% of households have a radio or TV in their home.

Host Specific (UN)

Overall, 23% of respondents did not have access to Internet at home, but this reached a high 35% among female-headed households, 30% among smaller households of 3 members or less and 26% among vulnerable Jordanians.

In terms of internet connectivity at home, 58% reported having limited data whereas only 4% have unlimited data, 15% reported having a WiFi connection, 23% reported having no type of internet connection.

Camps and Host (NRC and WV)

87% of respondents have access to an internet connection at home. 57% of respondents with internet said it is not reliable enough for online learning.

94% of youth between the ages of 15 and 32 years old cited the smartphone as the most commonly used device. 90% own a smartphone and for the majority of those youth (82%), they are the sole user of their smartphone in the household.

Although internet access is high among youth (82%), 66% report interrupted access currently as a result of:

- Quality of connection (34%)
- Financial barriers (32%)

Camp residents and out of school youth are the most affected by interrupted internet access.

Awareness of Distance Learning

Camp Specific (NRC)

94% of households surveyed with in-school children between the ages of 6 and 17 years of age are aware of MoE distant learning platforms.

Camps and Host (NRC and WV)

Education came in as the 3rd most urgent need following cash and food.

Generally, there were low levels of awareness among youth between the ages of 14 and 32 of any kind of remote learning. Only 29% were aware of remote e-learning providers, with the most known service providers being MoE and Edraak.

Greater awareness among:

- In-school (47%) than OOS (22%)
- In camps (36%) than in host (24%)
- Older youth 25-32 (40%) than younger youth 16-18 (22%)

Use and Accessibility (including challenges) of Remote Online Learning

Camp Specific (NRC, Care, and RI)

Of households that are aware of MoE platforms and have in-school children between the ages of 6 and 17 years, 98% use some type of platform (website, TV, or both) to access MoE remote online learning.

In spite of having high access to internet devices, the majority (84%) prefer using TVs, due to weakness of internet connectivity and financial concerns in accessing the internet as mentioned by some of the households surveyed.

Households who are aware of MoE online learning and do not use any type of platform cited the reasons as follows:

- Unable to get the channel (55%)
- Child not interested (27%)
- No internet connection (27%)

- Weak internet connection (9%)
- No TV (9%)
- Parents unable to support (9%)
- No devices that connect to the internet (9%)

Due to the non-interactive nature of the MoE platforms provided, several parents mentioned how difficult it is for their children to ask questions.

In Azraq specifically, the majority of respondents have children that are in school (70%) and 76% of those students are engaged in remote education. Challenges include:

- Children not taking remote schooling seriously (54%)
- No internet or devices that connect to the internet (15%)
- The school did not operate remote education (8%)
- No TV (8%)

In Azraq, 98% of household agreed that their children use available devices / internet connection for learning purposes, with Zaatari reporting 96%.

Host Specific (Care, Organization not specified, UN, CSS)

61% of respondents in host communities reported being engaged in online learning, whereas 39% reported not being engaged. Reasons for not being engaged include:

- Schools haven't shared anything¹ (42%)
- Waiting for schools to begin on TV (35%)
- No devices, including smartphones, laptops, or TVs (17%)
- No internet (6%)
- Child is sick (1%)

For assessments done after the Darsak platform was launched. Overall, 46% of respondents reported that their children were not accessing Darsak. Lack of access to Darsak was particularly likely to be reported among the ITS population (80%), Syrian and Non-Syrian refugees (63% and 65% respectively), and female-headed households (60%).

The Darsak platform, using the TV, was the main reported form of attending classes (67%).

61% are experiencing challenges in accessing distant learning platforms. Reasons include:

- Unavailable strong internet connection (36%)
- No laptop (27%)
- Child's inability to focus on the lesson because of the inconvenience caused by other family members (15%)
- No smartphone (12%)

¹ Assessment done prior to MoE platforms

This is relatively consistent across gender and governorate, with only a higher number of Sudanese reporting no laptops (67%).

More specifically, 55% of Jordanians reported using the platform, with 51% reporting having difficulty accessing the online platform. Feedback provided by Jordanians is as follows:

- 80% of users reported that these platforms are not as good as school education
- 61% reported being moderately or extremely satisfied with platform
- 72% reported being moderately or extremely satisfied with teachers presenting the material

52% of students stated that they attend lessons on a daily basis, whereas 21% reported attending lessons once every two days.

Camps and Host (NRC and WV)

Around 72% of children attend public classes through Darsak platform (learning platform by the government). 72% of children access this platform through TV, 6% through internet, and 22% use both channels.

For none MoE specific online learning platforms, the most popular programs include, TV (62%), WhatsApp (51%) and Facebook (10%).

Only 14% of **youth** between the ages of 14 and 32 claim to have engaged in remote online learning in this past year. Females, host residents, and youth in formal education are the most likely to engage in this form of learning.

Reasons for youth not engaging in online learning include:

- No access to internet (30%)
- Preference for interactive learning in classrooms (24%)
- No access to a device (22%)
- Not interested (18%)
- No time (10%)
- Other (3%)

One of the main reasons youth have not engaged in this form of learning is due to internet access. Internet access is a particular issue among camps residents when compared to host, females and OOS youth. There is also a general preference of learning in an interactive environment rather than self-learning.

Of youth who are engaged in remote learning (14%), only 21% report accessing the Darsak platform. Those who have not cited the reasons as follows:

- OOS (63%)
- Not interested (19%)
- Not aware of the platform (16%)
- No internet access (3%)

Support to Students, Caregivers, and Teachers

Camp Specific (NRC and RI)

Only a small number of students (15%) have access to other educational support platforms, such platforms include a WhatsApp group used for follow-up by their respective formal school.

1 out of 4 children surveyed require support on all 4 subjects. This is especially higher in students aged 13 to 17 years where 41% require support on all 4 subjects, compared to 23% of students aged 6 to 12 years. Subjects include Arabic, Math, Science and English.

English is the main subject that requires support as less than 50% of households are able to support their children. This is followed by 68% being able to support their children with Math, 70% for Science, and 73% for Arabic.

94% of parents are willing to be contacted on a regular basis by facilitators to provide learning support, with WhatsApp being the preferred method of sharing material (54% prefer voice-messages, and 41% prefer videos).

88% of households reported caregivers/students being interested in and able to and have time to participate and engage in distance remedial/drop-out education.

Parents feel the best duration for video E-learning sessions are:

- More than 20 minutes (52%)
- 15 – 20 minutes (33%)
- 5 – 10 minutes (12%)
- Up to 5 minutes (4%)

Best format for texts includes:

- Pictures and examples (75%)
- Pictures only (13%)
- Texts only (8%)

Best method for feeling well-connected with teachers:

- Lessons pre-recorded (56%)
- Direct education through applications (43%)
- Other (1%)

Host Specific (UN)

41% of all respondents reported having witnessed negative impacts on their children's well-being due to the COVID-19 crisis and curfew, especially among Jordanian respondents and large households of 7 children and above.

Increased displays of anxiety, fighting among siblings, nightmares and difficulty in controlling children were the most commonly cited manifestations of stress among children. 21% of respondents reported that they had noticed an increase in conflict within the family and decreased patience in dealing with children. Both these trends were particularly prevalent among the Jordanian population and within large households.

26% of respondents reported having used emotional or physical violence against children, especially in large households and among the Jordanian population. This is low compared to previous survey results such as the DHS, but relates to incidence of violence that, in the families' perceptions, is attributable to the COVID-19 situation and resulting curfew.

- 26% reported having used emotional or physical violence against children
- 25% reported using emotional violence against children
- 9% reported using physical violence against children

Camp and Host (NRC)

Among youth, there is a high expression of interest in remote e-learning from those who have not engaged in it this past year, especially among camps residents and older individuals. Where 73% reported interested interest in engaging, out of those who are not engaged.

When asked about preferred methods of learning, host residents seem have no preference, whereas camps residents would prefer learning via WhatsApp.

3. Areas Requiring follow up and overall recommendations

- There is a need to further investigate the correlation between accessibility to distance learning and learning (i.e. comprehension etc).
- Need to examine what support systems are required for parents/caregivers and teachers.
- Continued advocacy for equity in access to learning opportunities, zero tolerance against violence, gender equality etc.
- PSS for parents, students and teachers.
- Planning for Safe Reopening of Schools, Higher Education and TVET institutions to start immediately with collaboration of MOE, UN, donors and NGO partners.
- Beyond digital gap, need to consider how to support parental engagement and safe learning environment for children in vulnerable households.
- Greater need to invest in improving online-learning environments and contents for HE and TVET, especially free and open sources to reach more vulnerable youth.

CARE Recommendations

- Provide emergency cash assistance to vulnerable households that are not able to cover their basic needs such as rent, food, medicine, NFIs and access to the internet, particularly to households headed by women, the elderly or PwDs.

- Disseminate information about available assistance, services, health information and recommendations on how to support families with virtual studying for their children via WhatsApp and social media.
- Distribute tablets to children whose families do not have TV and any other equipment needed for virtual learning.
- Inside the camp, enhance internet connectivity to facilitate remote learning.
- Prepare a longer-term plan to address the implications of COVID-19 on the health, the economy, the education and protection of all segments of the community.

UN Recommendations

- Dissemination of activity-based content to effectively engage parents and caregivers through online and paper modalities.
- Communication and awareness campaigns to support vulnerable children to re-enroll in school.
- Communication and awareness campaigns to increase the knowledge of caregivers and children regarding available online/paper-based resources.
- Prepare for school re-opening and support summer design and implementation of school readiness and catch-up programmes prioritizing the most vulnerable children.
- Provision of learning devices/equipment and connectivity to children in vulnerable communities to bridge the digital gap.
- Professional teacher development to support distance and online learning, including pedagogy and online safety.
- Distribution of learning packages (printed resources and stationary) to children in vulnerable communities.
- Continue and enhance the provision of mental health and psychosocial support and case management services to all children and caregivers affected by the COVID-19 in vulnerable communities.
- Conduct follow-up rapid needs assessment, explore addition of other organizations and expansion of scope.